

CHALLENGE



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PLP BLASTS TIANJIN EXPLOSION

SUNSET PARK, BROOKLYN, August 26 — “Tianjin means we got to fight back!” As we responded to the industrial explosion that has killed 158 people in China, hundreds of workers in this mainly Chinese and Latin neighborhood took our leaflets in Chinese and English. Many Latin workers took CHALLENGE in Spanish. Dozens stopped to observe our multiracial group of women and men chanting, “When the working class is under attack, what do we do? Stand up, fight back!”

This was Progressive Labor Party’s second rally in the neighborhood this week. Workers attentively listened to our speeches in Chinese and English calling for solidarity with protestors in China in the wake of the Tianjin massacre. We connected hazardous working conditions in China to those in the United States. In this neighborhood, one of three people live below the poverty line. Whether they are in Ferguson, Brooklyn, or Tianjin, workers have everything to gain by uniting to smash capitalism.

Murder, Not Accident

On August 12, two dangerous and toxic chemical warehouses owned by Rui Hai Logistics exploded near the port city of Tianjin. The death toll is still rising. It left thousands more injured, homeless, exposed to future health problems, or missing. The explosion also damaged 17,000 homes. Since then, in Shandong, a Runxing Chemical Technology Co. factory has also exploded.

The capitalist media has called the explosion in Tianjin a number of things: tragedy, industrial accident, disaster. But the working class can see Tianjin for what it is: capitalist murder. The government, businesses, and environmental academics all knew about the dangers of this chemical industry as early as 2008! But the lives of workers are expendable under capitalism, and their deaths a calculated risk the bosses gladly take in this “thriving economic development zone” (New York Times, 8/31). The port in Tianjin is the fourth largest in the world, with nearly 500 million tons of cargo passing through it each year. It connects 500 other ports in 180 countries.

Surely a port that reports over \$104 million (USD) in annual profits—and a Chinese government that invests \$145 billion in its military—could have a few dollars left over for safety measures for workers? No, not under capitalism, where workers are treated as commodities and used to churn profit. Tianjin and Shandon are but two of the latest atrocities of a system that is based on the exploitation of workers. We need a world based on our needs and run by workers, not bosses and their drive for profit.



Workers gathered around to listen to speech in Chinese denouncing the Tianjin murders.

No Good Bosses

While the western capitalist media like the British Broadcasting Corporation and the New York Times are quick to blast imperialist rival China for putting “profits over people,” they don’t dare point fingers at their own rulers’ murderous exploitation. What was their bosses’ response? John Deere and Toyota are closing their factories near Tianjin. (Read: Unemployment and poverty for workers.) Other companies like Wal-Mart are “monitoring the situation” in their facilities in Tianjin.

The international working class must respond to these explosions. We must shut the bosses’ profit system down. Whether in Mexico or the U.S., in Nepal or Syria, workers know too well the devastation this profit system wreaks on their lives: racism, sexism, unemployment, deportation, deadly infrastructure, murders by the state, inter-imperialist war. That’s why today we chanted, “Asian, Latin, Black, and white, workers of the world unite!”

We Can Make a Better World

Workers once ruled China and developed a system that valued the health and safety of working women and men. The Chinese Revolution and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution raised the living standards

of the masses, from mass literacy to mass health care and education. In the span of ten years, workers doubled their life expectancy and cut the infant mortality rate in half! The gains communists made with women workers were commendable. The sexist practices of arranged marriage, foot binding, illiteracy, prostitution, and female infanticide were eradicated. This was possible only under a worker-run society. While the Chinese Revolution fought for socialism, Progressive Labor Party has learned from the old movement and fights directly for communism.

With the return of full-fledged capitalism, workers in China and worldwide are suffering under horrendous economic and political burdens. In China alone, nearly 70,000 people died while working with toxic chemicals last year (truth-out.org). What does the working class have to look forward to? More capitalist mass murders and an eventual world war among rivals like China, the U.S., and Russia.

The working class has no stake in Chinese or U.S. bosses. Join PLP to create a different future for our class. Let’s build a worldwide communist movement where the health and lives of workers is the order of the day. We can make a better world!✊

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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OUR FIGHT

★Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

★Only the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today’s world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

★Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world’s workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

★While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim “communism is dead,” capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

★Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society’s benefits and burdens.

★Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of “race.” Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

★Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

★Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

★Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion’s false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

★Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP’s criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a “following” around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual’s writing of an article.

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Editorial

Trump: Racist Servant of Imperialists

Donald Trump’s openly racist presidential campaign is just the latest example of how the capitalist ruling class uses elections to sustain its dictatorship over the working class. From Haiti and Egypt to the United States, competing factions of millionaires and billionaires are sorting out which group will hold state power—and which will be disciplined and suppressed. In addition, the rulers need elections to keep workers tied to the myth that the profit system can be reformed to meet our needs. In the process, these bosses divide the international working class with appeals to racism, sexism, and nationalism. They use stooges like Trump to scapegoat immigrants for mass poverty, unemployment, and the perpetual economic crises caused by the profit system. Capitalism can never serve the working class!

The Progressive Labor Party is fighting back in more than two dozen countries to smash the capitalist class and their electoral farces. Only communist revolution can create a world where workers have a real say over the crucial issues that affect them. Only a communist society—run by and for the working class—can end the nightmare of imperialist war and the mass slaughter of immigrants.

Every politician serves one faction of capitalists or another. In the U.S., the heart of global imperialism, the fight between capitalist factions is heating up. Enter Donald Trump.

A Racist Servant of ExxonMobil

While Bernie Sanders attempts to win over liberal reformists who are disillusioned with eight years of Barack Obama’s empty promises, Trump is busy rallying a different segment of the working class. This group has a deep hatred and distrust of the U.S. federal government, and is vulnerable to being swayed by Trump’s crudely racist and sexist attacks. An the New Yorker magazine (8/31/15) noted, “Ever since the Tea Party’s peak, in 2010, and its fade, citizens on the American far right—Patriot militias, border vigilantes, white supremacists—have searched for a standard-bearer, and now they’d found him.”

But Trump’s greater danger is that he is hardly the renegade outsider he purports to be. His multi-billion-dollar fortune derives from the dominant, finance capital wing of the U.S. ruling class. These bosses, represented by Exxon-Mobil, Morgan Chase, and mouthpieces like the New York Times, are scrambling to protect their obscene profits in an escalating competition with their imperialist rivals, notably China and Russia. Trump’s “rogue” candidacy has been intensively publicized by the Times. His proposals are both criminally racist and wildly impractical—to deport all 11 million undocumented workers in the U.S., or erect a wall along the entire U.S./Mexican border, or eliminate birthright citizenship. Even so, Trump’s rants could help legitimize more moderate-sounding—but equally racist—Republicans like Jeb Bush or Marco Rubio. They could also galvanize frightened liberals into rallying around an imperialist war-maker like Hillary Clinton.

Currently, the chief dispute among U.S. bosses centers around imperialism. On one side stand the biggest finance capitalists and industrialists, who need to hold on to the Middle East’s energy riches by force. Clinton, Bush, Rubio, Sanders, and Joe Biden all front for this wing, as does Trump. As the Times pointed out (9/1/05), Trump and Bush “are the only leading Republican candidates who have not signed a pledge not to raise taxes.” More specifically, Trump is threatening to raise taxes on greedy hedge fund managers and to close overseas tax loopholes for U.S. corporations—measures that will be needed to fund the broader global war to come.

On the other side are the more domestically oriented bosses, led by Charles and David Koch, who have less to gain from current and projected U.S. wars—or from the corporate taxes required to pay for them. The Koch brothers plan to raise nearly a billion dollars for the 2016 elections, and are still searching for the right candidate to represent them.

Americans for Prosperity, a Koch front group, excluded Trump from its recent “Defending the American Dream” summit because his candidacy originates from the main imperialist camp:

Former president Bill Clinton had a private telephone conversation in late spring with Donald Trump at the same time that the billionaire and reality-television star was nearing a decision to run for the White House....Four Trump allies and one Clinton associate familiar with the exchange said that Clinton encour-

Who are all these friends, all scattered like dry leaves?

The radio says they are just deportees.

Deportees, by Woody Guthrie, 1948

Capitalists love to point to voting as the height of human achievement. Whenever the bosses ruling the European Union and the United States launch an invasion, they justify their slaughter for profit by claiming they are “spreading democracy.”

Today, the international working class is facing a crisis. Millions of our class sisters and brothers have been displaced by imperialist wars, imperialist-backed civil wars, or capitalist economic crises. Because capitalism deprives workers of real choices, thousands of them brave dangerous journeys to the EU and U.S. in the hope of finding work and surviving. Nearly every day there is another tragic story of immigrating workers killed by this murderous system.

Throughout the world, capitalists are using this crisis to drum up working-class support for more racism and more imperialist war. France’s neo-Nazi National Front, U.S. presidential candidates like Donald Trump, and fake leftist Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro are just a few of the bosses seeking to intensify lethal anti-immigrant racism. In Sweden, where the neo-Nazi party recently polled 25 percent of the electorate, the fascists have proposed a series of laws to prevent desperate immigrants from entering.

Of course, capitalism grants no “right to vote” to millions of immigrant workers worldwide on whether they want to be stuffed into tiny ships, cross hot deserts or suffer abuse from human traffickers.

Communism means workers’ power, no racist borders, and no workers forced from their homes and families to find work. Voting strengthens the dictatorship of capitalism by giving workers the illusion of participation while following the capitalists’ laws. Smashing capitalism for good means building a mass international PLP and a mass Red Army for armed revolution. The road to revolution will break a lot of capitalist laws. As we continue on that path, we must struggle with workers to break with the dangerous notion that voting under capitalism can bring communism any closer.

aged Trump’s efforts to play a larger role in the Republican Party (Washington Post, 8/5/15).

According to Bloomberg News, a major Wall Street news service:

Failing to win the nomination won’t make Trump electorally irrelevant....His chance of winning the presidency [as an independent] would be poor, but his chances of splitting the conservative vote and helping a Democrat get elected would be good (Bloomberg, 8/24/15).

Even Trump is open about his allegiance to the main U.S. imperialists!

Donald Trump wants to “knock the hell out of” Iraq’s oil fields in order to strike ISIS. And then he wants to take over the oil fields and funnel the profits back to the United States.... [H]e would then send in Exxon or another oil company to quickly rebuild the infrastructure once the conflict is over (CNN, 8/18/15).

Workers’ True Enemy: Imperialism

By his own words, Trump adhere to the Carter Doctrine, the imperialist stance codified by former President Jimmy Carter in 1979: that any threat to U.S. oil interests in the Middle East would be met with a military response. Followed by every U.S. president since, this policy has cost millions of working class lives.

In another token of imperialist loyalty, Trump floated the name of Jack Welch, ex-CEO of the huge military contractor General Electric, as a potential Treasury secretary. It was war-maker GE, through its NBC subsidiary, that catapulted Trump to national fame by running his TV show, “The Apprentice,” for 14 seasons.

The self-styled “independently wealthy” Trump has also offered the Treasury post to his real source of cash, hedge fund billionaire and imperialist tool Carl Icahn. In 2014, a single bond issue left Icahn Enterprises LP in \$3.5 billion of debt to Citigroup and Morgan Stanley (Bloomberg, 1/6/14).

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Education Battle Breaks Borders

TEXAS, August 24 — Today an international group of students, teachers and workers rallied in front of our city's Mexican Consulate to support the struggles of teachers in Oaxaca, Mexico. Progressive Labor Party and friends marched down city streets chanting, "When students and teachers are under attack, what do we do, stand up and fight back!" And "Las Luchas Obreras, No Tienen Fronteras!" (workers' struggles have no borders).

U.S., Mexico — It's All the Same

We passed out leaflets that connected the struggles of students and teachers in Mexico to the struggles of students and teachers in the U.S. Workers at bus stops and in storefronts expressed agreement with our chants and leaflet. One worker pointed out the similarities of the U.S. Common Core education reforms in the U.S. to the reforms in Mexico.

The Mexican ruling class's reform efforts have shut down the teacher-union run education institute that serves primarily indigenous working-class families. This reform includes a new teacher evaluation system that ties student test scores to the teachers' job security. This new system mirrors the Common Core education reforms in states such as New York, and the new T-TESS evaluation system in Texas, which uses a similar system of rating teachers based on students' standardized test scores. This tactic pits teachers against students and blames

teachers rather than capitalism for the inequalities in the education system.

Following the lead of the federal government, Texas is taking more direct control of teacher job evaluations. This is a fascist attack. Fascism is the outgrowth of global capitalism. It is the intensification and centralization of the repressive and ideological forces in order to maintain the existing capitalist class domination. Under these reforms, the government targets teachers, threatening to fire them for low-test scores. This new system is racist, hurting working-class Black and Latin school districts the most.

At a recent faculty meeting in a Texas school where this new evaluation system is being rolled out, school administration showed a film of a supposed "master" teacher teaching a class. This "model" class was of an all white senior honors English class. Afterward the faculty was asked for their input. One teacher stood up and explained that the video was disrespectful to teachers who teach in mainly Black, Latin, and immigrant schools and to their students who face greater challenges from capitalism. The faculty erupted in applause.



Rely on the Working Class

The local teachers' union claims to oppose this new system. However, in practice they have actually helped implement this all-out attack on teachers. The union has known about the development of this new system for at least one year, but has done nothing about it. Now, instead of organizing teachers, students and parents to fight back, they have hired "experts" to help teachers avoid being fired. The working class must only rely on itself to fight back, not experts. That power of workers must be organized under a revolutionary party

fighting to end this system.

We will continue to fight alongside all teachers and students of the world. The fight against capitalist education reforms has no borders. We will continue to discuss the connection of struggles of teachers around the world with teachers and students on our campuses. We will continue to raise international working class unity with our friends until our working class army destroys all borders and build a communist society.✊

NEW YORK CITY, August 24 — Education workers in Mexico are fighting back against the government racist education reform law. Progressive Labor Party here in NYC organized a protest outside of the Mexican consulate today in solidarity with the struggle of the National Coordinator of Education Workers (CNTE) union of section 22 in Oaxaca.

We denounced the killings, disappearances, and harassment of workers and youth. Some of the consulate workers supported us and took our literature. A Dominican woman passing by stopped to chanted with us in solidarity. Another worker congratulated us and said he was happy to see this movement. He said we must not minimize things because out of each worker that supports us we can build hundreds more. No matter how few in numbers we are now, the communist politics will spread. That is why what we do now is important.

Situation in Oaxaca

The government is dissolving the Oaxaca State Institute of Public Education (IEEPO), putting an end to the CNTE's over 20-year control of education. Judges have also ordered arrests of 15 CNTE teachers in Oaxaca, charging them to disrupting elections. This is a part of the fascist move to discipline a militant workers' struggle that has been going on strike almost every year since 1970. The bosses seek to exert control over a crucial institution through which they rule: the schools.

The government Governor Gabino Cué Monteagudo and his lackeys don't tell the public that Section 22 of the CNTE fought along with parents more than 20 years ago for schools to be built, uniforms and books to be given so that children could study. And now, they take away the gains workers have made. They only want education according to the bosses' needs.

Bosses Attack from All Angles

The teachers' union, a profession of mainly women, there have been one of the most militant and the largest force in Oax-

aca, not only for the positions they can give other teachers, but also their militant defense for workers and education against the policies of the local and federal state government. In the last elections they burnt all the voting ballots, so there would be no voting. They've carried out many strikes against the disappearance and killings of teachers. These education workers fight racism, and in the interest of indigenous and rural working-class families.

Scared, the government responded with militarizing the city with the navy, establishing a curfew, and firing and attacking workers any way they can. They are using scabs to break the movement and have infiltrated paramilitaries and provokers in the demonstrations. It has even used another unions as an alternative of organization and the teacher's national union has frozen the accounts of section 22 so that they don't have any funds. Despite solidarity from parents, the bosses and their media have been using some parents to discredit the movement. Government officials are also paying home visits to parents to coerce them into opposing teachers.

Struggle Must Continue

There is no solution under capitalism. Any reform we win is temporary, as we know from Oaxaca, because the capitalists will take it away as soon as they can. The real solution will come when workers organize under our party the PLP to destroy the capitalism with a communist revolution. Only then can lives of workers and students change in every sense; education will be in service of the working class, no more nationalism, sexism, racism, or any other divisive rubbish the capitalist system throws at us.

There is great potential for international solidarity here. It would be important for the teachers of Oaxaca to link this struggle to teachers currently on strike in Uruguay. As schools open in the United States, youth and teachers have a lot to learn from workers in Latin America about defying the bosses. From Mexico to the United States, the struggle continues!✊



WASHINGTON, DC, August 24 — When communists set the stage for fightback, the working class takes it up with enthusiasm, and advances the fight. This is what happened at a local Progressive Labor Party rally here near the Mexican Cultural Center. We called on workers and students to join in the anti-racist solidarity with the bold mainly-women teachers of Oaxaca as they embarked on a strike against the Mexican government's militaristic gang-up against them.

Suddenly, a worker from Oaxaca joined our rally with great joy and took the bullhorn, declaring that he had many friends in Section 22 (the union local in Oaxaca) and that all workers had a stake in the outcome of this monumental battle. A worker at a local non-profit housing developer rode by on his bicycle, and later noted that his son has spent several months organizing with workers in Chiapas, another of the areas under racist attack by the Mexican government. A board member of the local postal union also joined in speaking on the bullhorn, expressing his union's solidarity with the teachers and insisting that his local and PLP participate in each other's future actions against the bosses. No problem! Many drivers and passersby grabbed 180 leaflets and 120 CHALLENGEs. This response from workers shows workers across borders have every reason to unite and fight back as one class.

As this demonstration proves, the opportunity for international solidarity is real. The fight in Mexico is a battle against racism against the indigenous workers of southern Mexico. Similar to movements in the U.S., the government in Oaxaca is trying to seize centralized control of education. The bosses are blaming fighting workers for a capitalist crisis they created.

The struggle will continue worldwide!✊

Remember Marikana! Workers, Students Show Solidarity

NEW YORK CITY, August 16 — Thirty comrades from Progressive Labor Party, including members from other countries, went from the 2015 PLP convention to join more than one hundred professors, students, and other workers of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC) to turn up the heat on the South African consulate. We rallied in solidarity with the 20,000 South African workers who gathered on that same day in the northern town of Marikana to protest the brutal slaughter of striking workers there three years earlier. In August, 2012, platinum miners were on a wildcat strike against Lonmin, the British-owned mining giant, demanding a living wage and an end to intolerable housing conditions. On August 16, in a planned attack, the police opened fire on a large crowd, killing thirty-four miners and wounding eighty. The Marikana Massacre is the worst since sixty-nine demonstrators were slaughtered by the apartheid regime at Sharpeville in 1960.

The International Committee of the PSC, the union of faculty and staff at the City University of New York, organized the demonstration, whose members are in the midst of a difficult five-year battle to obtain a labor contract in the face of the insistence by Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo's (close ally of NYC's business elite) that all state workers accept concessionary agreements. As in Greece and South Africa, CUNY faculty, staff and students have been hit with tuition hikes and are experiencing the harsh reality that politicians serve the ruling class. Several PSC members and union leaders gave speeches drawing these connections, after

which the crowd enthusiastically chanted:

*Hey hey, ho ho, the murder of strikers has got to go!
economic apartheid's got to go!*

*Same struggle, same fight, South African & U.S.
workers unite!*

Same struggle, same fight, workers North & South unite!

One of our PLP comrades spoke of his experiences in Ferguson, Missouri, where Michael Brown was murdered and Black workers are fighting back. He compared Ferguson to the racist conditions in South Africa, which exist because the ouster of the apartheid government left capitalism in place. Although South Africa has tremendous mineral, manufacturing and agricultural wealth, it has enriched only the capitalists, while the actual producers – the working class – have been left impoverished. Our comrade told the gathering that if we want to defeat racist oppression here and in South Africa we must first identify the root cause – capitalism – and commit ourselves to overthrowing it.

A long-time PSC activist read a letter from protest organizer Trevor Ngwane, who blasted the African National Congress (ANC) government for working hand-in-glove with capital and making a mockery of the “freedom” millions fought for under apartheid. Another speaker, representing workers in New Jersey, noted that South African workers have a proud history of international labor solidarity. In 1986, for example, workers in Freehold, NJ were fighting the 3M corpora-

tion's plan to close their plant. In support of U.S. employees, the 3M workers in South Africa went on strike. Imagine how much stronger the working class would be if concrete acts of worker solidarity like this became commonplace!

Revolution, not Reform

The decades-long, bitter struggle against apartheid was marked by tremendous personal sacrifices, and workers all over the world protested and were jailed supporting the anti-apartheid struggle. The ANC fought hard to liberate people from the iron heel of apartheid. But as the past two decades of ANC rule have shown, we must also topple the racist economic order that is its foundation: capitalism. Because that wasn't done, life for Black workers in South Africa is even harsher today than it was under apartheid – more poverty and greater inequality. The only thing that's changed is that a few ANC top officials – like Cyril Ramaphosa, the former president of the miners union who now sits on the board of directors of Lonmin – have become millionaires. Maintaining capitalism turns former “liberators” into exploiters, whether in South Africa, Mozambique, El Salvador, Vietnam or anywhere.

The Progressive Labor Party has members in Africa, and we extend an invitation to workers in South Africa to join our party and organize for communist revolution throughout the continent. This time let's nail the coffin shut on hundreds of years of colonialism, imperialism, and apartheid by smashing capitalism!✊

Antiracist March on the Beach

LOS ANGELES, August 8 — A multiracial group of 70 women and men transformed the scene on Ocean Front Walk in Venice Beach by marching through the crowds chanting, “Justice for Brendon Glenn; Justice for Jason Davis!” and “Black, Latin, Asian, White, to smash racism we must unite!” The response was overwhelmingly positive.

Brendon Glenn was an unarmed, homeless Black man shot to death by an LAPD kkkop on May 5. In the months since, the only word from the LAPD is that they are “conducting an investigation.” The police have refused to release video from a surveillance camera, leading the marchers to chant, “Release the video. Now!” The cops involved—Clifford Proctor and Jonathan Kawahara—are apparently on paid home leave. The shooter, Proctor, is Black, exposing the lie that racist killings are solely the work of white cops, or individuals' racist ideas.

How did this Venice march come about? Members of a Unitarian Universalist church, including several members of the Peace & Social Justice Committee (PSJ), attended the UU General Assembly (GA) in June, where a resolution was passed supporting the Black Lives Matter movement. A PSJ member suggested that our committee push for a #BlackLivesMatter banner in front of our church. PLers on the committee explained why, in the crucial fight against the racist police terror, unemployment, and healthcare of this system, we should not support Black Lives Matter organizations.

PLP fights racism and racist police terror at every turn, so it is important to show that the BLM movement, while attracting thousands who have the best anti-racist intentions, has a ruling class-funded leadership that divides the working class through identity politics. Billionaire George Soros funds them. These ideas are dangerous to our class, as they try to convince Black workers that they should have an alliance with Black bosses and not with their white, Latin, and Asian working class sisters and brothers. History shows that our class can never win without multiracial unity.

PLers on the committee did not entirely win that argument this time, but there was agreement on dropping the hashtag (#) from the banner, to support the concept but not the organization, and including “Racism” with the “No” symbol over it, as inspired by the anti-racism buttons many of our church members have been wearing.

Applying PLP's understanding that anti-racist class struggle is a critical ingredient for building a revolutionary communist movement capable of defeating capitalism, we suggested that PSJ organize a rally and march in response to the police murder of Brendon Glenn.

The committee enthusiastically adopted that idea,



and over the next several weeks we involved nine other local organizations as co-sponsors. (Black Lives Matter did not respond to invitations through its national and LA websites.) Fourteen members of our congregation were among the participants; we aim to bring at least 30 to the next march on September 26.

PLP has a history organizing in this church, getting to know people, developing confidence in each other, fighting for our ideas, distributing CHALLENGE, and helping lead other struggles, such as support for car wash and hotel workers.

Fight Racism

As we organized for the August 8 march, the LAPD killed again in Venice. Jason Davis, a homeless white man, was killed by the kkkops July 13. They claimed Jason, who appeared to be mentally ill, had a knife. The only thing visible, in a video made by a bystander, is a box cutter on the sidewalk about 10 feet from Jason's body.

At the rally, a speaker said that her whole life she benefitted from “white skin privilege” and intended to use her privilege to support the movement against police killings of Black men. Another speaker responded, admiring her anti-racist dedication, but argued that white working people are also exploited and oppressed by capitalism, but not to the same degree as Black workers.

As evidence against “white skin privilege,” he said, “Look at a chart that breaks down unemployment by

so-called ‘race.’ In a period where Black unemployment is going up, does white unemployment go down? No. It also curves up, although to a lesser degree.”

He said the same could be seen in healthcare, education and housing, and that the U.S. soldiers who died in Iraq and Afghanistan were disproportionately (to their percentage in the U.S. population) white non-Hispanics. “Is that a privilege?” he asked. He concluded that white working people can be far more than “allies” or “supporters” of Black workers; they are comrades in struggle.

In fact, the concept of “white-skin privilege” is one more divisive tactic that convinces members of the working class that white and non-white workers do not have the same enemy and the same fight. It hides the true nature of capitalism—a system built on exploitation of the entire working class, no matter the ruling-class imposed “race” of a worker, because that is how profit is made. The super-exploitation and oppression of Black workers does not mean that white workers are “privileged”—it allows for all workers' wages and living conditions to be lowered.

The continued struggle of PLers in their churches, workplaces, and schools against the concepts of “white skin privilege” and against BLM-promoted “Black-only spaces” is crucial in uniting the working class. To smash this capitalist system that builds itself on the backs of the working class, all workers must see themselves as having the same enemy, the same fight, and as communist fighters for a better future!✊

New Orleans: Lessons from the Katrina Genocide

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina sideswiped the city of New Orleans. The capitalist class and its politicians turned this unnatural disaster into a genocide of more than 1,400 mostly Black workers. The racist displacement of tens of thousands of Black families was the largest refugee crisis in U.S. history (New York Times, 9/11/05).

Katrina exposed the face of fascism to workers worldwide. One hundred thousand mostly Black workers were left to die and then forced into concentration camps by the National Guard. For half a century, the capitalists knew that New Orleans was vulnerable to storms. They knew that a direct hit would devastate the city and could wipe out poor Black neighborhoods like the Lower Ninth Ward. These areas were especially vulnerable because of canal dredging and the destruction of natural woodlands to promote commercial development and the bosses' profits. Even so, levees could have been reinforced and protected. Tens of thousands of mostly Black families could have been evacuated in plenty of time. But under capitalism, maximum profits and imperialist wars trump workers' lives. Ten years later, the working class of New Orleans is still under attack and still fighting back!

Workers in New Orleans displayed mass heroism in the fightback against the bosses' attack in Katrina's aftermath. Progressive Labor Party responded with solidarity actions on the job and in the streets. We connected the genocide there with the genocide of the U.S. invasion and sanctions in Iraq by attacking capitalism as their common source and proclaiming armed communist revolution as our goal. In this way we moved many workers into this anti-racist battle.

Workers Square Off Against Fascism

For weeks following Katrina, there was a news blackout in the area. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) took control, kept hundreds of rescue buses and helicopters at nearby bases idle, and hired private Blackwater mercenaries to protect ruling-class property. Reporters were barred from much of the city, including the Superdome, which housed over 26,000 refugees. Soldiers under racist FEMA's authority barred an armada of 500 civilian fishing boats from conducting rescues, turned back a convoy of volunteer Houston firefighters at gunpoint, and burned food sent from workers around the world at an incinerator in Georgia, among countless other crimes.

Under the false pretext that they were looting, workers found outside after curfew or attempting to travel on the few usable roads were threatened and shot. Katrina exposed the racist foundation of this system.

In spite of this massive repression, workers within and around New Orleans organized their own rescues and evacuations. Other workers attempting to barter goods in exchange for food or evacuation also braved being shot.

Throughout the winter of 2006, the rulers called for a larger military occupation. Liberal politicians like current Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton called for expanding FEMA's powers and withdrawing troops from Iraq for deployment in New Orleans. Outside the U.S., the Progressive Labor Party organized in their unions and mass organizations for solidarity with the workers of New Orleans, and sent messages of support. Within the U.S., PLP organized relief and spread communist politics among refugees in Texas and the Midwest. In major U.S. cities, we mobilized hundreds of workers to attack the liberal bosses' plan to expand the military occupation, under the slogan: "From New Orleans to Iraq, the working class must fight back!"

PLP Learns and Fights in Summer Project

Our organizing activities culminated in the 2006 New Orleans Summer Project. This summer-long project was led entirely by young, multiracial comrades, women and men. Comrades and friends joined local organizations to assist with the cleanup. We got to know residents, learning from their experiences and introducing them to communist politics.

The city was still under military occupation. Local organizations attacked PLP and anyone who supported multiracial, working-class unity. Years later, a founder of one of these organizations revealed he was an FBI informant.

For comrades new to PLP, and even many veterans, operating in this hostile environment was a steep learning curve. Yet our comrades built relationships with many anti-racist students and workers. Black workers of the Lower Ninth Ward warmly welcomed our Party's efforts and were open to our goal of communism. Some National Guard soldiers were receptive to our presence, as well. We guaranteed regular CHALLENGE distributions to new friends and thousands of workers there.

The Meaning of New Orleans

Fighting back after Katrina was not the first time the working class of New Orleans led the way forward. Over five days in November, 1892, Black and white workers paralyzed the city with a general strike for a ten-hour workday—the first general strike in a major U.S. city. Despite the racist filth printed in the bosses' media and their backing of KKK-style racism to split the working class, Black and white workers united with such disciplined multiracial unity that capitalists in neighboring states feared this "virus" might spread.

Today, New Orleans is more unequal than ever. According to Census data, there were 100,000 fewer Black residents in 2013 than in 2000, compared with an overall decrease of 11,000 white residents in the same period. Hundreds of billions of dollars in "aid" went to banks, insurance companies and other capitalists. Many who were relocated could not return for lack of assistance. The child poverty rate is about 40 percent, and the city's incarceration rate is twice the national average. The median income of Black workers is 54 percent less than white workers, the second largest gap in the country behind Atlanta, Georgia.

Nature may create storms like Katrina, but capitalism—a system by and for the bosses—creates the disasters. Barely one month after Katrina, capitalism struck again in South Asia. On October 8, 2005, a massive earthquake occurred in the Kashmir region of Pakistan. An estimated 87,000 workers were massacred in Pakistan and India. Despite the fact that Kashmir was in an earthquake zone, the capitalists of both countries invested their research in weapons for war as they compete for control of the region's land, resources and workers. Under capitalism, whether in East Asia or Haiti or Nepal or the U.S., workers' lives are disposable.

Multiracial unity is essential to the fight for communism, a system where workers run society to meet workers' needs. As in 1892, the working class of New Orleans is teaching the workers of the world how to fight back and organize amid the never-ending disasters of capitalism. New Orleans is yet another example of Black workers playing the lead role in our fight toward a worldwide communist revolution.

Ten years on, PLP still fights and learns with the working class in New Orleans. We invite workers worldwide to join us in organizing an international PLP to smash this capitalist house of horrors once and for all!✊

CHALLENGE PROJECT

LEARN TO FIGHT, FIGHT TO LEARN

BROOKLYN, August 13 — Snippets of conversations in English, Spanish, Hebrew, and Mandarin. Keys tapping away. Pens scribbling furiously. Some arguments and laughter over an article. This is the sound of the Challenge Summer Project. This August, comrades and friends from around the world came to New York City before our Convention to participate in the production, distribution, and strengthening of CHALLENGE, the communist newspaper of PLP.

After kicking the project off with the Hoops for Justice basketball tournament (see CHALLENGE 9/2), 50 people worked together to produce the most collective edition of CHALLENGE to date. We began with a study group on capitalist propaganda versus communist propaganda.

Red vs. Expert

Some people wrote articles while others chose graphics to accompany them. Some crafted snappy headlines, while a large group of people edited the articles to make sure they had a strong political line. Another posted on PLP's social media sites: twitter, Facebook, and our blog. Still others translated the articles in English and Spanish. Nearly everyone was new to producing CHALLENGE.

The result? A paper for the masses by the

masses. This edition of the paper (9/2) reflected the large collective that helped produce it. Many comrades gained an insight into the work that goes into creating it. Some raised concern about the quality of translations and the topics covered in the paper. CHALLENGE is only as good as the collective that produces it, and the only way for it to capture all the fightback stories and ideas of the working class is for a large number of workers and students to contribute.

Many commented that producing CHALLENGE is indeed more challenging than they initially thought and that they understand why writing regularly for CHALLENGE is important. To produce and distribute a paper of even higher quality, we must be part of the process.

Throughout the summer project, we also sold hundreds of CHALLENGEs at rallies throughout Brooklyn. For many, it was their first sale, first time on the bullhorn, first time leading a rally. Overall, we gave out so many CHALLENGEs that we ran out of the latest issue and had to go back three issues! We also got quite a few contacts and collected many donations for CHALLENGE. One of the goals of this CHALLENGE project was to show that anyone can be a communist leader: whether it be in the streets rallying and representing the Party or in front of a computer writing or translating

stories of class struggle.

CHALLENGE, for and by the Collective

Workers must not only learn to fight, but also fight to learn. Many participants discussed the paralysis that comes along with having to write for CHALLENGE, saying that writing articles feels more like filling in a formula. Capitalist culture dictates that writing is an individualist process, meant for academics and ruling-class thinkers. On the contrary, as we learned during this summer project, creativity is a collective process. Our experience in the working class is far more important to CHALLENGE than "technical training." When writing an article or making a speech, if we must worry, worry about how workers and youth will respond to the communist ideas we express.

As a transition into PLP's 50th anniversary convention (see page 8), we concluded the Summer Project with a picnic and discussion of the convention workshop materials. Comrades not only struggled with each other over the politics and participation in CHALLENGE, but also built and strengthened ties!

We invite all our readers to write for CHALLENGE, distribute it among friends and co-workers, and use CHALLENGE as a tool for organizing a communist revolution!✊

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.



Straight Outta Ferguson

This summer I traveled with friends to Ferguson, MO to stand united with the anti-racist fighters there on the one-year anniversary of Mike Brown's murder. We spent time on Florissant Rd. where the center of fightback has occurred. On the streets of Ferguson there is a sentiment among masses of people that you can fight the racist terror of the police and you can win!

As we spent more time in the community, we visited the neighborhood and spot where Mike Brown was murdered. We spoke with residents about the killing and the year of fightback. We talked about Challenge and the need to build a party around multi-racial unity to end these racist attacks once and for all.

We met a woman who lives in an apartment overlooking the spot where Brown was murdered. Speaking with her highlighted the ways in which the bosses have attempted to erase the memory of Brown and the anti-racist struggle in Ferguson.

She first pointed out that almost no one is aware of a security camera located on the corner of her building. The camera was installed well before the incident occurred and overlooks the exact spot where Mike Brown's body fell. The footage from the camera has never been seen despite requests from residents to view the tape. She also said that friends of hers who recorded the entire shooting had their cameras and phones confiscated by police and never returned.

As we talked, she pointed to a community memorial for Mike Brown that is located in the middle of the street where Brown died. The memorial is made up of stuffed animals, flowers, and balloons. She explained how the memorial has been destroyed several times by vandals under police protection. Despite these attempts to erase the memory of Brown, the community continues to rebuild the memorial. The family has attempted to make this "unofficial" memorial permanent. However, the city would not approve a memorial in the street and in order to draw attention away from where the incident occurred, approved an "official" memorial located on a sidewalk hundreds of feet away.

As we ended our conversation, she pointed to the apartment buildings in the area. She explained that most of the units were empty because many of the residents have moved out. She told us how the apartment complex owners had illegally gone into resident's apartments in order to find evidence of illegal activity that could be used to threaten them. Fearing attacks from the police, many residents have left. She explained that by forcing the residents who witnessed the incident out of the neighborhood, the slumlord apartment owners and local police force work together in an attempt to stifle the anti-racist fightback in Ferguson.

This experience taught me that the working class is open to our ideas of multi-racial unity. Many workers understand that the racist police murders are part of a larger system of oppression and exploitation of the working class. The more workers we know, the more we will know about what is happening to our class. The experience of Ferguson has taught and will continue to teach our party and our members invaluable lessons in how we can wage war against the bosses and their racist system.

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Israel,U.S — Same Struggle

I am a member of the party in Israel-Palestine since 2010. This year, for the first time, I attended the Summer Project in New York City. This taught me much about the local way of political work. I also had a chance to meet friends and comrades from all around the world. I saw that the struggles we have here in Israel-Palestine are the same kind of struggles others are fighting worldwide: sexism, racism, and the class struggle. Therefore all around the world, we are fighting the same war: to fight against capitalism. Racism and sexism will die with it. We also all fight against borders, which are barriers that divide and conquer workers.

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PLP, not Politicians!

This year marked the 3rd annual Hoops for Justice basketball tournament. This yearly event is hosted by the friends, family and community of Shantel Davis and Kyam Livingston, two Black women gunned down by the racist NYPD. Hoops for Justice is about commemorating their lives, bringing the community together, and demonstrating that we will keep fighting back! I was standing at PLP's literature table, lined with our anti-racism buttons, pens, and CHALLENGEs. Among the goodies were t-shirts that said, "Don't vote. Revolt!" A man came up to me and asked if the shirt meant that we should vote for communists, or if it meant that we shouldn't vote at all. I replied that we need to get rid of the system because racism is the bedrock of capitalism, and a different politician won't change that fact. He claimed to agree, but then said that it was the same thing as telling people not to work even though we need to eat. His argument was so absurd that I barely knew how to respond, but I told him that work is necessary in order to produce essential goods like food and shelter. The key difference between work under capitalism and communism, however, is that we control our own labor power under communism and that it is not exploitative. On top of that, the difference between work and voting is that one is essential for society to work while the other is not. He kept incessantly repeating his argument that we are telling people not to work before eventually realizing he had been beat, shrugging, and walking away.

Unbeknownst to me, this man was a local politician who is idolized in the community. Right after our conversation, he took photos with the Black youth participating in the tournament and left without socializing or getting involved in the activities. This conversation and his photo-op reinforced the fact that politicians have little substance. Their arguments are hollow and they do little for the working class unless it makes themselves look better. PLP, on the other hand, fights in the streets with the working class and makes clear-cut, common sense analyses of the system. Today strengthened my belief that the answer to this racist, oppressive system lies not with democratic politicians but with revolutionary communism and PLP.

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Washroom breeds Communists

The other day, I went into a public restroom where several women were waiting for an open stall. There were two stalls and the lock on the door of one of them was broken. The women were patiently waiting their turn for the other one. I mentioned that we could hold the door closed for each other so we could use the one with the broken lock. They all said they'd rather wait. Instead of waiting, I asked one of them if she'd hold the door for me. She agreed and then when I was done, she was happy to have me hold the door for her.

It occurred to me that this was a small example of how capitalism and communism train us to think. Unlike communism, capitalism trains us not to rely on others and not to think outside the box. Just imagine when our class has the power to put into practice the best solutions to all our problems big and small. What a wonderful world it will be!

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Class Struggles in the Confederacy

I often wondered what it would be like living in Nashville during the U.S. Civil war. After reading *Bitterly Divided: The South's Inner Civil War* by David Williams, I thought that I would have found many likeminded antiracists.

Mr. Williams makes the fine point that the first distinction of the civil war is one of class. The big difference is the division between the Slave owning class and the non-slave owning class. The slave owning elite owned all the fertile land and wanted to maximize their profits by growing the money crops of cotton and tobacco. They needed thousands of slaves to cultivate these crops. This elite class controlled the political structure that wanted to secede from the Union and form the Confederate States of America where slavery could flourish.

The non-slave owning class could see no purpose in fighting this war, but they were called upon to furnish the soldiers. They were promised by the elites that the soldiers and their families would be taken care of and fed by the Confederates. From the very beginning these promises turned into lies.

First, the cash crops of cotton and tobacco occupied all the fertile land and sufficient land to grow food was not available. The planter class also exempted themselves from serving in the military, which caused resentment and hatred among the fighting soldiers, who called it a rich man's war and the poor man's fight. Desertions from the Confederate Army started practically from the beginning of the war especially after they instituted conscription.

Southern women played a brave and important role in weakening the Army of the South. They hid and protected the deserters and draft-dodgers from the Confederacy. Since there were food shortages caused by the planter's refusal to grow food, the southern women organized raids on the food warehouses and distributed it among the hungry.

In addition, the slaves and ex-slaves worked with Confederate deserters and union sympathizers. They also joined the union armies. Aside from these activities the slaves also sabotaged and spied on the confederate soldiers' movements.

When supporters of the flag talk about the heritage of the confederate flag, they should remember that most non-slave owning workers were opposed to the war and that the Union Army was made up of 25% Southerners. The cover of the book, which displays a generic Civil War soldier holding a U.S. flag and a Confederate flag in Double Springs Alabama, depicts the irony of those who refer to Southern heritage when claiming the flag. The statue depicted represents the soldiers from the area who volunteered to fight in the war: 239 for the Union and 112 for the Confederacy.

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Servant Trump

Continued from page 2

Icahn bankrolls many of the hideous building projects with the "Trump" name plastered over their entrance.

Don't Be a Sucker for the Bosses

Workers must not be fooled into falling for Trump's racist filth. At the same time, it would be a mistake to dismiss his clownish behavior as a circus sideshow. In appearance, capitalist elections in every country are always something of a circus. But it is through them that the bosses conduct their deadly serious business.

PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers worldwide under the slogan, "Don't Vote, Revolt!" The international working class doesn't need phony elections or professional politicians to build the world we need. PLP is building an international revolutionary communist movement of millions that will smash all racist borders, smash anti-immigrant and sexist attacks on our sisters and brothers, and smash capitalism once and for all. Join us!🇺🇸

Fighting Anticommunist Lies

On August 23, each year since 2008, the European Union marks the “European Day of Remembrance for Victims of Stalinism and Nazism.” The EU’s rulers want to spread the big lie that the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany—Joseph Stalin and Adolph Hitler, in particular—were equally evil, while the capitalist imperialists stand for all things good.

The world’s capitalist ruling classes all agree that “communism is dead.” Yet each year their slanders of Stalin and the Soviet Union of his day get wilder and more extreme.

Why so much anti-Stalinism and anticommunism? Because communism remains the biggest threat to capitalism. And the period of Stalin’s leadership in the USSR coincided with the era when the world communist movement achieved so much good for the international working class.

The real meaning of this commemoration is that the Soviet workers beat the fascists in World War II despite the capitalists’ collaboration with Hitler. But you won’t hear that from the world’s capitalist bosses!

History of M-R Pact

On August 23, 1939, Stalin’s Soviet Union signed a non-aggression treaty with Hitler’s Germany. It’s often called the Molotov-Ribbentrop (M-R) Pact, after the Soviet and German foreign ministers of the day. Anticommunists claim the two countries effectively agreed to divide Europe between themselves. This is a lie.

In fact, the treaty’s great significance was in defining Eastern Poland as lying within the “Soviet sphere of influence.” This meant that if the German army beat the Polish Army, it would still have to stay hundreds of miles away from the pre-1939 Soviet border. In addition, Poland would remain in existence, potentially to ally with

the USSR against Hitler.

The USSR had been trying to get Poland, Britain and France to agree to declare war on Germany when Hitler attacked Poland. But the British ruling class was willing to let Hitler have Poland if he would continue East and attack the USSR.

In September 1939, the Germans whipped the Polish army in a few days. The Polish government fled the country to Rumania. Hitler was ready to allow a pro-Nazi Ukrainian state in the former Eastern Poland. So the Soviets had no choice but to occupy Eastern Poland — a region that wasn’t really “Polish,” since imperialist Poland had seized it from Soviet Russia in 1921.

The M-R Pact helped to save Europe from Hitler’s domination. In October 1941, the German army advanced within sight of Moscow before the Soviet forces stopped them. If they had been able to launch their attack 300 miles closer, the Nazi hordes likely would have taken Moscow. If Hitler had conquered the USSR, he would used its immense resources against England.

Two More Soviet Moves vs. Nazism

The M-R Pact was one of three critical moves by the Stalin-led Soviet government to save the USSR and Europe from Nazism. The other two were the Soviet-Finnish War and the defeat of the “Tukhachevsky Affair.”

1. The Soviet-Finnish War of 1939-1940. The border of Finland, an ally of Nazi Germany, was very close to the major Soviet industrial city of Leningrad. To create a broader buffer zone, the Stalin government demanded that Finland give up land close to Leningrad in exchange for other Soviet land. (“Since we cannot move Leningrad,” Stalin said, “we must move the border.”) When the Finnish government refused, the Red Army defeated the Finnish army and took that land.

Without this redrawing of the border, Leningrad would have been captured by the Finnish army and allied with Hitler’s forces. Millions more Soviet civilians would have died. The Nazis would have used Leningrad’s manufacturing and port facilities to intensify their attack on the rest of the USSR and on England

2. The defeat of the 1937 military conspiracy, also called the “Tukhachevsky Affair.” Some high-level Red Army commanders were plotting to seize power in the USSR, either by arresting and shooting Stalin and his government or by opening the front to a German and Japanese invasion. These former Tsarist officers were conspiring with anti-communist Leon Trotsky. In May and June of 1937, Soviet police arrested the ringleaders, who were tried, convicted, and shot.

Long Live Communism, Death to Anticommunist Lies

Each of these three events proved decisive in defeating fascism and saving the lives of millions of working people worldwide, and in preserving and strengthening the world communist movement. Which is precisely why the capitalists attack them.

The Soviets of Stalin’s day did marvelous things. They also made errors, some of which led to the return of capitalism to Russia today. We must study and learn from their mistakes, but also from their victories.

All communists and all working people everywhere should defend the M-R Pact, the Soviet-Finnish War, and the defeat of the “Tukhachevsky Affair” conspirators. We should expose the anticommunist lies that are promoted on August 23—and on every other day of the year.👁



RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times

Stalin exposed ‘American Exceptionalism’

Addicting Info, By Nathaniel Downes, 8/18 — Republican candidates...have...bat[ed] about the term “American Exceptionalism” multiple times. They...proclaim it as a status of greatness....The credit the term to Alexis de Tocqueville, a French aristocrat’s...book Democracy in America [but] the phrase...does not appear anywhere within that book. In fact, the term does not exist anywhere, until 1929. In 1929, the phrase first appeared in a letter....to one of the leaders of the Communist Party USA Jay Lovestone....from the Soviet Union’s Joseph Stalin. [Lovestone] sent Stalin an explanation as to why....America was an exception to the economic rules that the Bolsheviks had built their own models upon, that the usual rhetoric and explanations did not resonate with the United States.

Joseph Stalin replied...that there was an “American Exceptionalism” in place....Not that America was “exceptional,” but that America viewed itself as the Exception to the established order....Joseph Stalin believed that eventually it too would discover that the same rules over the economy still applied — a prophecy which came true only weeks later when the crash led to the Great Depression

The Soviet leader strongly felt tha the United States would eventually turn imperialistic, and become a military menace to the world in order to prove its exceptionalism. ...The phrase had been forgotten,...if not for the New York Times. In 1980...[it] ran a piece using the term pleading with...President Carter and...Ronald Reagan to defend that exception, saying it made the United States unique....[In] 2011...it began appearing in every political campaign speech almost overnight...

After 2010, it appeared on average five times per day within major publications or speeches, and the rate continues to accelerate....So, this little letter from Joseph Stalin, criticizing America’s arrogance to believe... [it was] above any rules, is now being batted about as a positive thing....It underscores that America is not exceptional, but...[is] deathly afraid....Hav[ing] lost...status in the world through...wars against unarmed nations and revealed...

as...the world’s bully, American Exceptionalism means...an admission of...fear to the end of Pax America. ...The father of American Exceptionalism, Joseph Stalin, has gotten the last laugh.... American Exceptionalism indeed.

U.S. air strikes murder civilians

NYT, 8/15 — An air strike by the American-led military coalition in northern Syria this week killed eight civilians, including two women and five children....

The strike left a yawning crater strewn with mortar shells....The explosions also caused the roofs of nearby homes to collapse....“My brother lost his five daughters and I lost my wife,” Maan Amouri said....Monitoring groups say the United States and its allies regularly underreport the civilian toll of the air campaign....

[They] say that the command’s figures are a gross understatement and that coalition strikes...have taken a much higher toll....

...Ossama Suleiman, the head of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights....[said] 181 civilians have died because of coalition strikes....The deadliest case...was in the village of Bir Mahle on May 1...said to have killed over 60 people, including dozens of women and children....One of Mr. Amouri’s sons...[said] five of his daughters, aged 4 to 10, were killed when the blast collapsed his house’s roof.

U.S. drone killers reap profits

GW, 8/7 — The...U.S. military has hired hundreds of private-sector contractors to the heart of its drone operations....

...It has long been known that U.S...firms supply billions of dollars’ worth of equipment for drone operations....Companies that...reap the benefits include BAE Systems and Edward Snowden’s former employer Booz Allen Hamilton.

The U.S. dependence on armed contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan has attracted close scrutiny...because of the notorious 2007 incident in which employees of...Blackwater killed 14 civilians in Baghdad

Israel’s Netanyahu rewards those who burn babies alive

GW, 8/7 — The condemnations...ring hollow. Binyamin Netanyahu denounced the arson attack by Jewish settlers on the West Bank...in which...a baby just 18 months old was burned to death....

The words sound empty...because...it is not a freak event....The Israeli human rights groups that monitor their country’s 48-year occupation of the West Bank...[said]...“Violence by settlers against Palestinians is part of the daily routine of the occupation....”

...This attack was the eighth time since 2012 that settlers have torched inhabited buildings. There have been dozens of assaults on property....In most...cases they didn’t find the perpetrators, despite having the best intelligence agencies on the planet,” [said the director of B’Tselem]....referring to the culture of impunity that has always protected the settlers....

Netanyahu....stung by the protests at Bet El...announced construction of another 300 units in Bet El and 504 in East Jerusalem. He did not punish the settlers for their behavior: he rewarded it.

Slavery reaps profits in ‘Deep North’

NYT, 8/24 — ...Rhode Island history involved the state’s preeminence in the slave trade....More than half of the slaving voyages from the United States left from [its] ports....Contrary to the popular image of the South,...Rhode Island has been called “the Deep North....”

...The Episcopal diocese...was steeped in the trans-Atlantic slave trade....The church...supported slavery and profited from it...even after...slavery had been banned in the state. Among the...Episcopalian slaveholders were Thomas Jefferson...and George Washington....

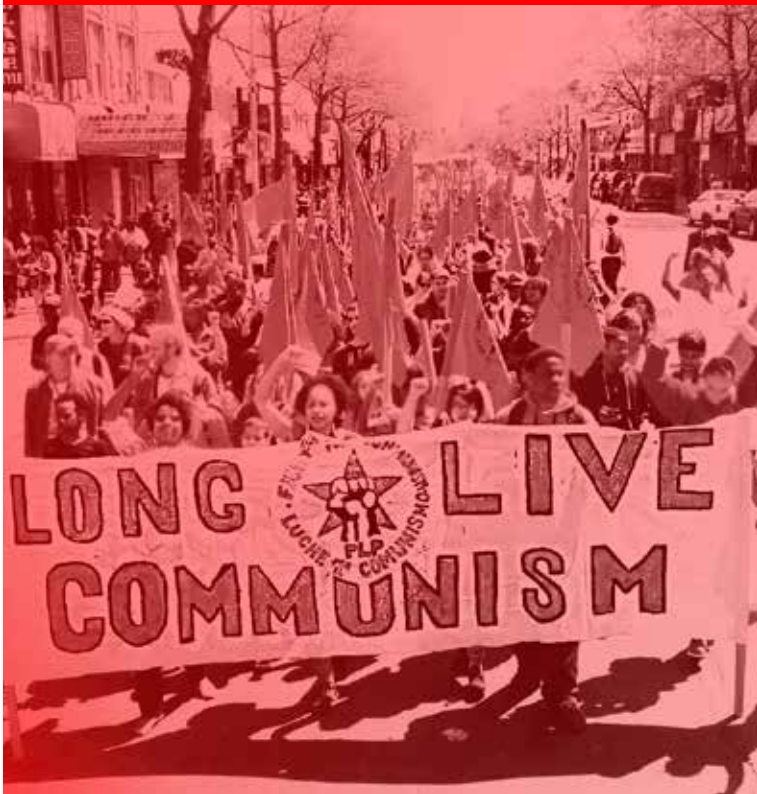
The [New England] region’s economy was inseparable from the slave trade...the earliest settlers bartered Native Americans they had captured for slaves brought from Africa...Merchants and suppliers...who grew wealthy from the slave trade founded Ivy League colleges....Between 1725 and 1807, more than 1,000 slaving voyages — about 58 percent of the total from the United States — left from Providence, Newport and Bristol. Those vessels brought more than 100,000 Africans to the Americas....

...By the middle of the 18th century...about 10 percent of Rhode Islanders were enslaved....The profits from the slave trade by James DeWolf — speaker of the Rhode Island House, United States senator, banker... — were so vast that...in 1837 he was the second-richest man in the United States.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PLP.ORG

PL's 50-Year Convention

ONWARD TO A LIFETIME OF REVOLUTION



2015 May Day in New York City

growing party worldwide and a review of the many, many fights that have made our party the vibrant force it remains today. As each fight was recalled, comrade veterans of each struggle rose and were recognized with thunderous applause. The evening was topped off by the singing of the Internationale in more than eight languages, led by workers and youth from five continents.

Sunday's session was an open-mic discussion of five resolutions our Party will unify around in the coming period. It was a strong exercise in communist centralism, the political process that will lead the working class to

power and to the final victory of a communist future. Lively discussion and disagreement was held around the most correct way to implement our anti-racist, anti-sexist, internationalist strategy to build the Party and wage armed struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Our Party has thrived for half a century as a vigorous fighting force because we have always understood the importance of entrusting leadership responsibilities with new generations of communist leaders. Those original thirty comrades were nearly all white and mostly male. Anti-racist struggle has played a key role through our Party's fifty years, and seeing this new leadership group come into its own at the 2015 convention was a huge highlight for me.

We know that workers will develop to their full capacity as human beings only when the working class has wiped out capitalism and established communism. Capitalism wastes more than precious natural resources. Above all, it is wasteful of human potential. Our convention was a small glimpse of how communism will tap into this great potential of the working class.

Our first 50 years gives us inspiration for the next 50 years and more. The Progressive Labor Party—as long as we wage both class struggle and an internal struggle against reformism/revisionism—will continue to lead workers and youth down the long and winding road to communist revolution.✪

INTERNATIONAL GREETINGS

Hello our fellow comrades in the U.S. and around the world. It is our sincere hope that you are all working and fighting hard against the unfairness of the capitalist system existing among the world's population. It was our plan to join your summer project against racism and capitalism in the US, particularly in Ferguson, but our plan failed because we were denied visas by the US Embassy here in East Africa. The Embassy wanted to harass us and pocket more than 160US dollars per visa. At the anniversary of Mike Brown's murder, we saw (through the mass media) your unity and commitment to fight back regardless of the government's attacks against you. We join your struggle here in East Africa by fighting against the government on the issues concerning the constitution and the general elections. Your fight is our fight, your success is our success. Let us continue to fight against the capitalist system that creates racism, sexism, injustice and inequalities. In doing so, we will create a classless world with a happy life.

— PLP in East Africa

PLP Comrades of Pakistan, El Salvador, Africa, France, Mexico, Colombia, China, the Dominican Republic, the U.S. — comrades from all around the world! Once again the capitalist-made borders are preventing us in Haiti from being physically present among you to share our experiences in organizing in the class struggle. One day, we will put an end to these divisions created by this system of inequality. In fact, in spite of the distance and different capitalist divisions of racism, nationalism, borders used prevent the unity of our class, we are more and more organized! We believe in communist revolution, and our international Party and our revolutionary line grows and strengthens day by day. Our presence in different struggles inspires the working class's confidence in our communist leadership and our confidence in the working class and our future.

Our convention brings new blood to the building of our Party and strengthens each comrade. We have much to lose if we fail to win the working class to destroy capitalism. If we fail, the current system will lead humanity to another stage of barbarism. We must not allow this to happen!

Only communist revolution can put an end to the material conditions and ideology that lead to racism, sexism, terrorism, climate change: all the phenomena that can only lead the world to savagery. We building a fighting organization and the decisive struggles to change the world. This is the enormous task ahead faced by each comrade of our party: to organize millions of workers around the world under the red flag of Progressive Labor Party! Long live communist struggle! Long live our Party, the PLP!

— PLP in Haiti

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